ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 8/4/65	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED000394	7145	N.A.	

4. AUTHOR(S):
N.A.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
College and University Faculties, Recent Personnel and Instructional Practices. Informational Item No. 23

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N.A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. JSCCHE
ST.
CITY. Madison, Wisconsin
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
Joint Staff Coordinating Committee for Higher Education

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	60	6

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR
survey

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

surveys Y-18A		effectiveness G-12		rank P-29	
Office of Education P-02		administration R-06		teaching benefits Y-23	
teachers Y-21		salaries Y-00	class size R-46	recruitment P-32	teaching aids Y-22
		educational TV G-11	audio-visual aids R-21		

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Reviews findings of a U.S. Office of Education study conducted in 1958 to determine what actions have been taken by colleges and universities to cope with faculty shortages and to maintain and improve instructional quality. Some practices used are employment of part-time and retired personnel; salary and rank increases; new fringe benefits; larger classes; elimination of overlapping course offerings, reduction of number of smaller classes; use of films and television. Frequency and trends in use of practices are noted, along with comparison of public and private institutions and comparisons by region and size of institution.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

IV-9

Wisc.: Joint Staff Committee for Coordinating Higher Ed. Madison, Wis.

Informational Item # 23
January, 1960

Clearing House Ref. File

SUMMARY

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FACULTIES
Recent Personnel and Instructional Practices

In order to determine the extent to which 12 specified practices relating to faculty personnel and 9 to instruction were being followed in institutions of higher education, the U. S. Office of Education sent a questionnaire to the nation's colleges and universities in May of 1958. A total of 1,610 schools furnished data covering the periods July 1957-June 1958 and July 1954-June 1957, the '54-'57 period used as a checkpoint to determine trends.

The findings of the study confirm the generally accepted view that most of the colleges and universities throughout the United States are finding it increasingly difficult to attract and retain the faculty members they need. Only a relatively small number of schools reported the non-existence of staffing problems. Most institutions with large endowments and high tuition reported little trouble in recruiting and retaining faculty personnel.

Colleges and universities in the Southern region are having staffing difficulties to a greater extent than those in the Northeast, North Central, or Western regions. Institutions in the Northeast region appear to be least affected.

To meet the problems which they are facing, colleges and universities are engaging in a number of practices, many necessitated by faculty shortages. Among these practices are:

1. Employment of retired professors, military officers, and persons from business, industry, and government;
2. Employment of numerous part-time persons from other fields;
3. Employment of new faculty less qualified than those formerly employed;
4. Employment at higher salary or rank or both higher salary and rank than previously given for similar training and experience;
5. Introduction of new and improved fringe benefits;

ED000394

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Office of Education

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6. Increasing class sizes;
7. Reduction of overlapping course offerings;
8. Placing of more responsibility on the student for his own learning;
9. Reduction of the number of smaller classes;
10. Giving courses completely or primarily by films and television.

More than 20% of the institutions reported a reduction in the amount of subcollegiate instruction. More of the universities than of the other types of institutions are employing the practices specified in the study to cope with faculty shortages. Theological and religious schools, professional schools, and junior colleges appear to be least affected by faculty shortages.

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COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FACULTIES
Recent Personnel and Instructional Practices

Recognizing that many institutions of higher education are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain qualified faculties in the face of expanding enrollments and the nationwide demand for professionally trained manpower, the U. S. Office of Education (USOE) initiated a study in May of 1958 to determine what actions have been taken by colleges and universities to cope with faculty shortages and to maintain, and even improve, quality of instruction.

A questionnaire was designed by USOE personnel and was sent to the presidents of the 1,940 institutions of higher education in the continental United States and its outlying parts. Usable returns, reporting practices in the July 1957-June 1958 period and comparing them with practices in the July 1954-June 1957 period, were received from 1,610 institutions. Thus, 83.0% of the institutions circularized, representing 94.7% of the nation's students, provided data for the study. College officials were asked to indicate whether or not practices followed were the result of faculty shortages. Indications were to be noted for twelve personnel and nine instructional practices.

Frequency of practices

The most frequently followed practice was that of granting salary increases averaging at least five percent a year during the period 1954-58. Approximately 85.0% of 1,467 institutions responding to this item in the questionnaire reported increases of at least five percent per annum. Only 40.3% of these schools indicated such a personnel practice was followed because of faculty shortages, however. More than half of the reporting colleges indicated that the increases were given "...out of fairness and justice to their faculty..." at a time of

rising costs of living. But, the study adds, "it appears likely that those institutions which did not grant such increases during this period lost ground in the competitive market for faculty."

The importance of fringe benefits to the personnel picture is emphasized by the provision of new or increased fringe benefits by 60.6% of the colleges and universities. While only 22.8% of the institutions indicated that faculty shortages were to blame for this action, benefits ranging from tuition-free education for faculty children to paid medical and improved retirement plans were seen as important to the procurement and retention of qualified faculty members.

Approximately one-third of the institutions reporting indicated that shortages of faculty have led to the employment of retired professors, military officers, or retired persons from government, business, and industry. Another practice widely followed (by 66% of the institutions) was that of hiring part-time personnel from other occupations. About 36% of the schools indicated that faculty shortages were to blame for this practice. In another action, slightly more than 30% of the colleges either raised the mandatory retirement age or hired professors beyond retirement age as stopgap measures necessitated by faculty shortages.

Staffing difficulties are reflected in the percentages relating to practices for attracting new faculty members. A total of 775 institutions (51.8%) reported that faculty shortages were behind the employment of new faculty personnel at salaries relatively higher than formerly while professorial ranks remained approximately the same. Also, new faculty members less qualified than their predecessors in the same positions were hired by 635 (42.0%) of the colleges reporting.

Instructional practices most frequently followed in the colleges are

detailed in TABLE 1. While approximately one-half of the institutions report following the practices listed, only one-fourth (approximately) of the schools indicated shortage of faculty as a causative factor.

TABLE 1

Practice	Following Practice	Because of Shortage
Reduction of duplicating and overlapping course offerings	58.2%	24.7%
Reduction in the number of smaller classes	54.7%	31.2%
Elimination, curtailment, or postponement of some programs of study	47.5%	25.5%
Increase in the size of lecture sessions	45.6%	31.8%

Trends in the use of specified practices

Practices followed during the 1957-58 period were compared with those of the 1954-57 period to discover any significant trends. By this means the USOE hoped to determine whether staffing problems were continuing unchanged or were increasing or decreasing in intensity. Analysis of the data submitted indicated that the nation's colleges were following the 21 practices listed by the USOE to a greater degree -- with only two exceptions -- in 1957-58 than in 1954-57.

"Particularly striking are the percentages of institutions which in 1957-58 introduced or increased the following practices due primarily to faculty shortages: Employment of new faculty members less qualified than those formerly employed for positions occupied (15.5%); employment of new faculty members at salaries relatively higher than formerly with ranks relatively the same (14.8%);

and employment of new faculty at both ranks and salaries relatively higher than formerly (9.9%)." The USOE thus concluded that the problem of recruiting and maintaining suitable qualified faculties was becoming increasingly difficult in 1957-58.

Private vs. public institutions

Private institutions more frequently than public institutions employed retired and part-time personnel in 1957-58. The private schools, mostly because of faculty shortages, employed more persons beyond retirement age than did the public colleges, and they also exceeded the public institutions in the granting of new fringe benefits. A total of 591 public institutions and 1,017 private institutions provided data for this section of the USOE report.

Public institutions, on the other hand, enlarged their lecture sessions considerably more than the private schools (57.2% vs. 38.7%). The USOE report indicates that this situation probably stems from the fact that many public institutions are under obligation to accept all qualified applicants from their taxpaying constituencies, whereas private institutions can be more restrictive and selective in their admissions, thereby keeping class sizes more in bound.

The public colleges also did more in the reduction in number of smaller classes (64.7% vs. 48.9%) and in the reduction in number of subcollegiate courses (26.2% vs. 19.0%). They also outstripped the private schools in the giving of courses completely or primarily by television (9.3% vs. 3.7%). The public schools also employed to a greater extent than private schools new faculty less qualified than formerly for positions occupied (53.8% vs. 39.2%). Most of these practices are linked to increasing enrollments in the public institutions which, for the most part, do not limit enrollments as do many private colleges.

Comparison by regions and by institutional size

Colleges and universities in the Southern region more than those in any other region are adopting various measures to cope with staffing problems. The Northeast region appeared to be in the most favorable position. Of 469 institutions in Wisconsin's region, the North Central, 68.6% employed new faculty at higher salaries than previously, and 62.3% of these schools attributed this practice to faculty shortages. Slightly more than 85% of the North Central institutions granted salary increases of at least five percent, and 44.4% indicated faculty shortages were responsible.

Universities more than the other types of institutions were found to employ the practices noted by the USOE, such institutions having the highest percentages of use in 11 of the 21 practices. The universities also exceeded other types of institutions in 13 of the practices due to faculty shortages. The USOE concluded that the larger sizes of these institutions make it more likely that the practices would be followed in at least some part or parts of them.

Universities were highest in percentage of use in: the employment of retired and part-time persons; employment at higher salaries, at higher ranks, and at higher ranks and salaries combined; employment beyond retirement age; providing new or increased fringe benefits; enlarging lecture sections; reducing the number of subcollegiate courses; offering of courses completely or primarily by TV; and offering courses completely or primarily by films. (More than one-fourth of the 139 universities reporting gave certain courses completely or primarily by TV.)

Theological and religious schools, with junior colleges not far behind, followed fewer of the listed practices than the other types of institutions. Religious and theological schools and professional schools other than technological schools were low in the percentages of use of practices because of faculty shortages. This is expected because such highly specialized institutions with relatively large staffs of part-time faculty members are least likely to be affected by manpower shortages faced by institutions competing for faculty with industry and government. Junior colleges were not hard hit by faculty problems in that the level of preparation required for staff members is lower than that usually called for by four-year colleges and universities.

A comparison by size of enrollments indicates that, generally speaking, the practices are employed progressively less with smaller enrollments. Institutions of over 5,000 enrollment had the highest percentage of use in 12 of the practices, and those in the 2,500-5,000 enrollment group led in seven others.

Number of practices followed by institutions

Institutions varied widely in the use of the 21 practices listed in the USOE questionnaire, the greatest number of institutions following specific practices being those employing 6, 7, 8, or 9 practices.

"The number of practices an institution is following because of faculty shortages is some measure of the status of faculty staffing at that institution. An institution having no staffing problems would employ none of the practices to relieve faculty shortages, whereas an institution having a serious staffing problem might well employ a considerable number of them," the USOE asserts.

Findings of the study indicated that only 248 (15.4%) of the 1,610 institutions participating reported that they did not follow any of the practices because of faculty shortages. A total of 341 (21.2%) others reported following only one or two of the practices because of shortages. On the other hand, 466 (approx. 29%) indicated that faculty shortages definitely necessitated the employment of seven or more of the practices, and three institutions reported following 17 or more practices to cope with staffing problems.